

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 03891 071957Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8735
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 03891

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, GE, UR
SUBJECT: BREZHNEV'S APPEARANCE AT STOPH MEETING MARCH 6

1. EVENING NEWS BROADCAST "VREMYA" MARCH 6 CARRIED TWO MINUTE FILM OF MEETING IN KREMLIN SAME DAY WITH VISITING GDR CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, WILLI STOPH. NEWS COMMENTATOR SPOKE DURING ENTIRE FOOTAGE SO BREZHNEV'S VOICE COULD NOT BE HEARD, BUT HE APPEARED QUITE WELL AND MOVED EASILY IN GREETING AND SEATING HIS GUEST. IN ONLY AWKWARD MOMENT, BREZHNEV SEEMED TO FORGET WHERE HE WAS TO SIT, PULLED OUT A CHAIR AT THE TABLE, HESITATED, THEN OFFERED IT TO STOPH BEFORE MOVING OUT OF CAMERA VIEW TO REACH HIS SEAT ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE TABLE. EXCEPT
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 03891 071957Z

FOR THIS SLIGHT AWKWARDNESS, BREZHNEV LOOKED AS WELL ON TV AS HE HAS SINCE LAST OCTOBER.

2. THE TELEVISION COVERAGE OF MEETING WITH STOPH WAS UNUSUALLY OBVIOUS IN ITS STAGING. THERE WAS NO ATTEMPT TO MAKE IT APPEAR THAT BREZHNEV WAS DISCUSSING BUSINESS, AS IS CUSTOMARY IN SUCH TV FOOTAGE. BREZHNEV REPEATEDLY

LOOKED AT THE CAMERA AND WAS FILMED FROM SEVERAL ANGLES.
AT ONE POINT HE WAS POSED IN HIS CHAIR AS IF FOR A POR-
TRAIT WITH THE CAMERA SHOOTING UP AT HIM FROM A POSITION
AT OR BELOW WAIST LEVEL. AT NO TIME DURING THE
TELEVISION FILMING DID BREZHNEV WEAR HIS GLASSES,
ALTHOUGH THE MARCH 7 PRAVDA PICTURE OF THE STOPH MEETING
SHOWED HIM AT THE CONFERENCE TABLE WITH HIS GLASSES ON.

3. COMMENT: THIS BREZHNEV TELEVISION PERFORMANCE STRIKES
US AS A FURTHER ATTEMPT TO PORTRAY A HEALTHY, CONFIDENT
LEADER GOING ABOUT THE IMPORTANT BUSINESS OF RUNNING
THE STATE. HIS RELAXED POSES AND SELF-CONFIDENT
GESTURES CONTRASTED MARKEDLY WITH THE TIRED, BUSINESS-
LIKE APPEARANCE OF KOSYGIN, ALSO SHOWN MEETING WITH
STOPH IN A MUCH SHORTER FILM CLIP MARCH 6. IN BOTH
MEETINGS, STOPH LOOKED VERY SERIOUS AND SEEMED SOMEWHAT
ILL AT EASE UNDER THE CAMERA LIGHTS. TOON

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